



Fact Sheet for the First 5 California Informal Child Caregiver Support Project: January 2004

Goal: To help educate and support informal (family, friend, and neighbor) child-caregivers in ways that will: a) enhance the quality of care for young children who are in these settings and b) improve their school readiness.

This Fact Sheet provides background information and a report on the current status of the First 5 California Informal Child Caregiver Support Project. This \$10 million project is being conducted in two phases:

1. The initial research steps for up to \$2 million are underway:
 - Focus Groups to determine caregivers' needs and how to best meet those needs to support the children's development;
 - Supplemental Materials Packet development based on focus group findings and school readiness and developmental domains;
 - Resource Guide for program managers on effective and promising/best practices for reaching and educating informal child-caregivers; and
 - Training on those activities and products.
2. The remaining \$8 million could be for implementation activities that may include:
 - Specific distribution strategies for the utilization of the Kit for New Parents (KNP) by informal child-caregivers;
 - Supplemental materials packet production and distribution;
 - County Commission demonstration programs in conjunction with the School Readiness Initiative to provide supports to informal child caregivers along with additional training and technical assistance to support these programs; and
 - Work in the areas of public education/media, policy, and research.

Phase One: Research

Background information

- After careful review and assessment of First 5 California current activities and contracts, staff determined that an existing Clearinghouse/Best Practice subcontractor, ETR Associates, would be able to perform the initial research steps within existing funds. This recommendation was approved at the November 2002 State Commission Meeting.

Status as of January 2004

- Between June and October, ETR Associates conducted 37 focus groups in 25 counties with nearly 300 diverse informal child caregivers or parents who use informal care to determine their concerns and needs and their preferences regarding potential materials for a supplemental packet.



- They also interviewed an additional 11 informal child caregivers who care for children with special needs and 10 parents of children with special needs who use informal care to determine if or how their needs vary from the needs of informal child caregivers in general.
- More detailed information on the focus groups is available in the Executive Summary (attached) of the Informal Care Focus Groups. This report includes participant demographics, design, and results in areas such as: Concerns and Challenges, Needed Materials, Requested Information, Requested Resources, and Barriers. The report is on First 5 California's website: www.ccfc.ca.gov.
- Additional focus groups will be conducted in late winter to determine the usefulness of the Kit for New Parents with informal caregivers.
- The Supplemental Materials Packet development and Resource Guide are also well under way.
- In March 2004, ETR Associates will be delivering three half-day trainings to County Commissions, School Readiness Programs, and other partners in four areas throughout California on conducting focus groups with informal caregivers and the use of the Resource Guide including best and promising practices in this topic area.

For additional information on the initial research steps of the Informal Child Caregiver Support Project or to obtain a copy of either the Executive Summary or Full Technical Report of the Informal Care Focus Groups, please contact Bayla Greenspoon at ETR Associates, (831) 438-4060 x183 or baylag@etr.org.

Phase Two: Implementation Activities

Background information

- Staff will make recommendations to the State Commission at the July 2004 Commission meeting for the Second Phase of the project.
- Implementation activities will be based on outcomes from the focus groups and material review and the development of the California Department of Education's License-Exempt Provider Training Project.

For additional information on the next steps of the Informal Child Caregiver Support Project, please contact Sarah Neville at First 5 California, (916) 324-7780 or sneville@ccfc.ca.gov.

Related Development

The State Commission will discuss a funding proposal from KCET to support the production of KCED, a public television program that will focus on developing the teaching skills of home-based caregivers to better support young children's school readiness. Focus group members identified television as one of several desirable modes for receiving information and ideas with the qualifier that it needed to be in their language.